Week ending December 16 1944 THREEPENCE

JOHN BULL

Every Thursday

DEVIN LIKES BIG TASKS

by A. G. Gardiner

TOO SLOW FOR 1945

by W. J. Brown, M.P.

You can replace the stopper . .

we can't!

Bulmer's Bottle Stoppers are made of precious rubber and if lost cannot be renewed. To help conserve vital stocks of rubber and at the same time maintain your supplies of Bulmers, please see that the stoppers are returned to your Dealer with all supplies.

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in the home means protection for the family, because wherever it's used its antiseptic lather washes away the germs . . . with the dirt.

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The British Thomson-Houston Co. Ltd. Crown House, Aldwych, London, W.C.2.

4024

FOOD FACTS

HOW TO GET YOUR CHRISTMAS EXTRAS

The extra food rations for Christmas have already been announced. These are: extra sugar, margarine, and cheese. There will also be extra sweets for the younger generation and extra cheese in place of meat for vegetarians. Here are the details of the extra rations and how to get them:

FOR HOLDERS OF ADULT BUFF RATION BOOK RB.1, CHILD'S GREEN RATION BOOK RB.2, JUNIOR BLUE RATION BOOK RB.4 AND RB.8X AND RB.8B.

SUGAR 8 oz. Obtainable once only between 10th December and 6th January. Preserves may *not* be taken instead. Coupon K for week 22 will be used. (Coupon 'Spare One' on some ration documents.)

MARGARINE 8 oz. Obtainable once only between 10th December and 6th January. Fats coupon for week 22 will be used.

MEAT Ration increased from 1/2 to 1/10, i.e., value of each coupon increased from 7d. to 11d. The value of each extra meat ration authorized on form RG.48 will also be 1/10. (Children's, 11d.) Obtainable between 17th and 23rd Dec. In Scotland, between 24th and 30th Dec. instead.

Cheese for Vegetarians who are authorized to get cheese in place of meat—6 oz. (12 oz. if authorized to have two special rations). Obtainable once only between 10th Dec. and 6th Jan. Cheese coupon for week 22 will be used. (In Scotland the coupon for week 23 instead.)

CHOCOLATE AND SWEETS 8 oz. (for young people only, holders of green or blue ration books). Obtainable between 10th December and 6th January. Personal points coupons (printed in red or blue) on a page in or taken from ration books RB.2 and RB.4 only: D coupons will still be worth one point each but E coupons will be worth 4 points each. Boys and girls under 18 who hold other kinds of personal points coupons (including those given in replacement of lost coupons) may obtain additional coupons on application to Food Office. A boy holding British Seaman's Identity Card should apply to a Mercantile Marine Office.

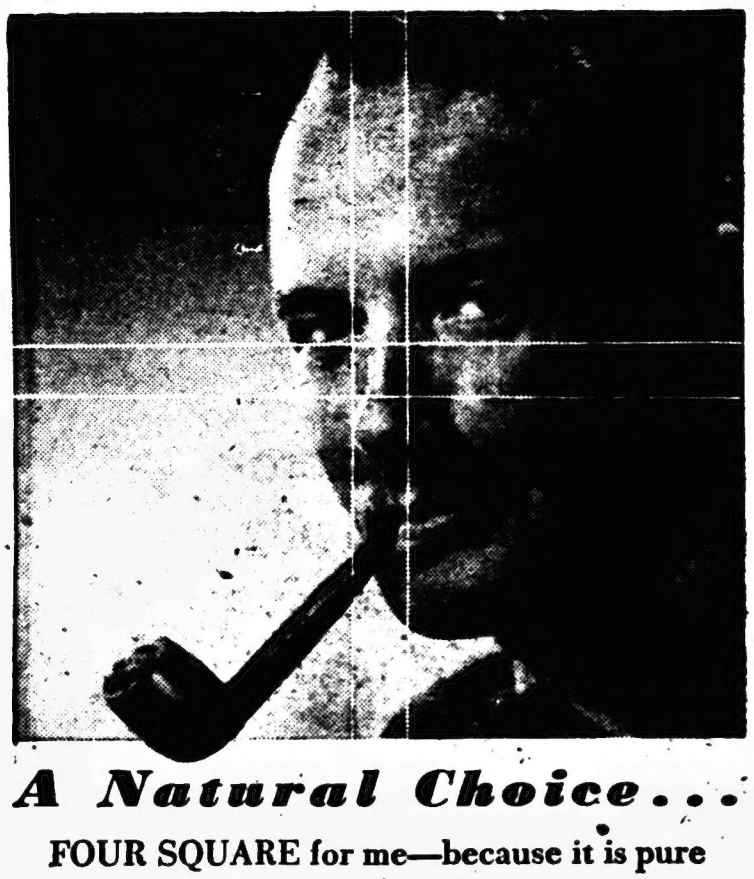
HOLDERS OF TEMPORARY RATION CARD RB.12. Where necessary, the extra rations may be obtained against form RB.12 until 1st week 22 (in Scotland week 23 instead).

HOLDERS OF WEEKLY SEAMAN'S RATION BOOK RB.6. The extra rations of sugar and margarine (but not meat) may be obtained against ration book RB.6 (full or modified), if the counterfoil for week 22 (in Scotland 23 instead) has been signed.

HOLDERS OF DUTY RATION CARD RB.8A will not be eligible for extra sugar, margarine, meat or cheese.

LISTEN TO THE KITCHEN FRONT ON TUES., WED., THUR. & FRI. at 8.15 a.m.

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, LONDON, W.1. FOOD FACTS No. 231



A Natural Choice . . .

FOUR SQUARE for me—because it is pure tobacco, without any artificial flavouring, matured and mellowed by ageing in the wood

FOUR SQUARE TOBACCOS

GEORGE DOBIE & SON LTD., PAISLEY, SCOTLAND

You like BISCUITS

And so do the youngsters. Mothers in their wisdom know that energy expended must be replaced, and whether it is work-time or play-time there is nothing quite like a biscuit to fill the need.

So remember when you are shopping, that while you like the biscuits, it is equally true that

. . . they like you!

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Cadbury quality—and no points

INTEREST —The best Training!

Any fellow with a box of tools is happy. A Hobbies Fretwork Set keeps his hands busy and his brain alert—a helpful hobby now to benefit his future character. Although in short supply, you may be able to get one of

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December 16 1944 JOHN BULL Volume 76 Number 2009 93 Long Acre London WC2 Telephone Temple Bar 2468

Without Fear or Favour

GREEK TRAGEDY

OUR TROOPS WERE welcomed by cheering crowds when they marched into Greece and Belgium. When the time comes for them to leave, will they be watched in a resentful silence?

British prestige is at stake. That means the honour of you and all of us in this land, our hopes of international friendship, our desire for a stable peace.

The action taken in our name in Athens and Brussels, therefore, is as disturbing as an unexploded bomb in our own street.

Certainly we could not allow military operations to be impeded by civic turmoil in their rear. But there is no reason to suppose that Cabinet reshuffles in either capital would delay a single Army lorry.

Operations will undoubtedly be delayed if we lose popular co-operation. And lose it we shall if we bolster up any Government against the will of the people.

IN BELGIUM a makeshift Government shows no sign of making itself more representative until an election can be held.

In Greece, the Left Wing Resistance Movement, angry at being disarmed while the Monarchists were allowed to retain their weapons rebelled.

Both in Belgium and Greece, Left Wingers formed the bulk of the Resistance Movements which helped to liberate their countries. Now they are unwilling to assume political responsibility except on their own terms.

That, briefly, is the situation. And the remedy?

UNRRA MUST SUPPLY food, clothing and other essentials, so that the liberated countries will be saved from economic disaster.

Politically, the United Nations must forget the dangerous doctrine of "spheres of interest." They must act in unison—to support temporary governments that enjoy public confidence.

And they must remember we are fighting for Democracy—not to keep a discredited government in power by the use of British tanks and Spitfires.

The Editor

HIMMLER'S NEW ARMED MIGHT

Air War developments. The first quisling is still busy. Labour Party Conference. £25 a week for manual workers. Church's anti-gambling crusader. Nap in Buckingham Palace?

IT IS NOW many months since the podgy Himmler quoted the words of Frederick the Great and gave this slogan to the people of Germany: "We shall battle around until our damned enemies condescend to make peace."

That is precisely what the Germans are now doing.

In the last war Ludendorff knew when the game was up. He refused to sacrifice a whole nation. Even though his armies were fighting desperately hard he knew that the end had come.

A month or so later the Armistice was signed.

Himmler Doesn't Care

To-day the position is different. Himmler and his cronies have known that the jig was up ever since the beginning of the year.

This has only made them fight the harder. The sacrifice of the whole German nation is a matter of indifference to them. They think first of themselves. They have to.

That is why, even at this late hour, there is a lot to be done yet before the end. In recent months, according to British military experts, the Germans have added another 500,000 men to their armies—by ruthlessly combing their factories.

Noisy Nights

THEY HAVE LOST ANY semblance of air parity, but they are experimenting hard. They have some fine jet-propelled and rocket planes. They are beaten, but they are still determined to make a fight of it.

This coming Christmas will literally be an awful time in Germany. The Allied raids are mounting and mounting, getting more and more overwhelming.

"Silent Night" will have an ironic meaning in the land of the Christmas trees this year. There will be few silent nights indeed, except when the weather grounds the most formidable air armada that has ever been known.

So far the weather has been kind to the Nazi overlords. There was a chance, a month ago, that a fine autumn would have seen them smashed.

They have survived, largely because of Western Europe's rainfall. Now they have a breathing space. The offensive on the Western Front has been slowed down in the mud.

But in gaining a few months they have merely added to the miseries of their own people.

First of the Quislings

MEANWHILE, FROM a reliable source, I have received interesting news of that first of the quislings, the Austrian Seyss-Inquart, who sold his country to the Nazis six years ago.

A cunning lawyer, he is busying himself in the remains of the German Foreign Office.

At present, I am told, he is working in a fantastic lawyer's maze—sorting out private Nazi holdings in neutral countries, protecting the "foreign" interests of rascals like Goering, Goebbels, Himmler, and the like.

Already he is offering bribes and other inducements to people who might "protect" the leaders, if and when they managed to make a getaway.

Seyss-Inquart is trying to save Goering's fortune

He is wasting his time, but he is dangerous.

Rebuke for Eden

THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT has never been more complicated than it is now.

One of the most extraordinary things that have emerged from it was the statement in which Stettinius, the American Secretary of State, criticised Britain's attitude over Italy.

Americans may consider that Eden's action in refusing to accept Sforza as Italian Foreign Minister was abrupt and unsatisfactory.

But so was the Stettinius way of saying so. It was not his job to rebuke Britain with implications of the type he used.

However, since then he appears to have modified his attitude. Critical about Italy, he appears to be moderately happy about Greece.

Change of Heart

HIS STATEMENT MAY have had additional point when we remember recent American foreign policy. The United States attitude to Spain, to Darlan, to Vichy, and to Mihailovitch hardly justifies them in lecturing Britain on the necessity of leaving nations to solve their own affairs.

Is it too much to hope that this may represent a change of heart? Does the Stettinius criticism imply that America is now anxious for a policy of world co-operation?

If so, the diplomatic brush was well worth while. We could not ask for better news.

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in addition to

FREE AIR RAID INSURANCE.

Readers not already registered can obtain Registration Forms from "John Bull's" Insurance Department, 128, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

Steady Wages, but—

ON THE HOME FRONT one of the most important recent events has been the publication of Ernest Bevin's Wages Councils Bill, which makes vital recommendations about the post-war regulation of pay.

It provides for Wages Councils with wide powers for those "tough" industries which originally had Trade Boards.

The Minister will be empowered to set up similar Wages Councils in any other industries where he thinks they would help the workers.

And, above all, the Bill will mean that wages and conditions secured during war time will be enforceable at law for five years after the war is won.

Labour in Conference

THE FORTY-THIRD Labour Party Conference, which opened in Westminster on Monday morning, has proved one of the most vital in the crowded history of the movement.

It was obvious from the first that two issues dominated all others, putting even such questions as housing into second place.

They were Greece and the coming General Election.

Unexpectedly, perhaps, there was little lobbying or demonstrating outside the Central Hall at the opening session.

Two forlorn-looking young women chanted "Hands off Greece" as Ernest Bevin arrived.

Twenty minutes later they made the same remark to Clem Attlee. But I doubt whether anyone heard them.

Laugh for Laski

Inside the Hall was gloomy, with an early morning patch of December sunlight gilding one of the banners.

Delegates who might normally have hung around outside, swapping greetings, hurried in to hear Professor Laski. It was noticeable that the first remarks to arouse any enthusiasm were outspoken pledges for downright Socialism.

And it was Laski who produced the first deep laugh, when he described Churchill as "that gallant and romantic relic of the 18th Century Imperialism."

Later he said that the "Prime Minister tended to look back at the greatness of our past, whereas we of the Labour Party look forward to the greatness of our future."

A Blessed Expert

I DISCUSSED CRAFTSMANSHIP a few days ago with a man who is an expert on the highest paid manual craft in the country, diamond cutting.

He is Albert Monnickendam, who has been cutting diamonds since before the last war.

Recently he received the blessing of the Ministry of Labour and the Board of Trade for a scheme whereby he will train suitable disabled ex-Servicemen as diamond cutters.

The late Sir Bernard Oppenheimer

CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

Mr. Monnickendam Rev. H. A. Job

tried a similar scheme, on a grand scale, at the end of the last war, and lost a fortune: Monnickendam is not dismayed.

There's Money In It

It takes many years to make a really first-class cutter, . . . The usual trade practice is for novices to start learning on ordinary stones and schoolboy marbles.

This, says Monnickendam, is unsatisfactory, for it tends to make a man nervous when he is promoted to real diamonds. So this one expert always starts his pupils on small diamonds right away.

His scheme will allow for the training of 100 men to begin with, over a two-year period. For the first twelve months they will receive a Government grant. Then they will get normal rates for their grade of work.

Really fine craftsmen get extraordinary salaries. Twenty-five pounds a week is not uncommon for a good "polisher."

One-Jewel Man

In private life Monnickendam is something of a literary man. He wrote a highly interesting book on diamonds three years ago.

You may have heard his voice: he often broadcasts on stones for the B.B.C. Sometimes he advises lawyers when complicated court cases turn on the value of rare stones.

He spends his life between Hatton Garden, where he has his office, and Brighton, where he has his factory. Nearly all his workers are veterans from the last war, who learned their craft years ago.

Unexpectedly, he wears one jewel: a pearl tie-pin. This seemed to me to be letting the side down.

Job the Crusader

AROUND THE ABBEY, Westminster still has a pleasant nineteenth-century air. Black-coated gentlemen representing all sorts of creeds and "isms" go quietly about their business.

One of them is the Reverend H. Allen Job, who is secretary of the Churches' Committee on Gambling.

For more than ten years now Mr. Job has waged a ceaseless campaign against all forms of gambling. His Committee, which is associated with the British Council of Churches, represents all shades of Christian opinion.

His President was Dr. Temple, the late Archbishop, that fine man and noble churchman.

Dr. Temple, who was a profound student of the human scene, was opposed to gambling in any form.

No Lucky Dips

I asked Mr. Job what his Council had to say about the lucky dips and the lotteries of the local church bazaars.

Dr. Temple, he told me, was strongly opposed to that form of punting. When a church asked the Archbishop to patronise a sale or a party he first of all asked whether any raffles or lotteries were being held.

He only gave his patronage when he was assured that the bazaar offered no such inducements.

What Churchgoers Know

Since his Committee was formed Mr. Job has produced pamphlet after pamphlet giving details of the spread of gambling.

You may have seen some recent figures in the papers, giving the Tote turnover at dog meetings all over the country. Those figures came from Mr. Job and his enthusiastic campaigners.

Before he turned his energies to his war against gambling Mr. Job had been all over the world. Born in Australia, he was once a missionary in Peru.

He told me that he could tell immediately whether or not his callers were churchgoers. If they were, they called him "Job," with a broad O, like Lobe. That is how you pronounce the prophet.

If they weren't, they called him Job, as in Work.

King's Open House

Will Mr. Job and his friends succeed in their campaign against gambling? They will have a hard job. I spent a pleasant hour turning up its history in the London Library.

For gambling is mentioned in the Old Testament and its roots are deep in antiquity. In the Middle Ages, on certain days of the year, the King used to keep open house at St. James's, for anyone who felt like going in for a gamble.

Times have changed. I can hardly imagine a loyal subject dropping in at Buckingham Palace for a quiet game of nap nowadays.

The Fantastic Council

LEAVING THE LONDON LIBRARY, where I collected Cobbett's "Rural Rides," I passed that temple of the bureaucrat, the British Council offices.

The Council is in the wars again, for a scientific author has revealed that it has just offered him a ridiculous £20 to write a 15,000 word textbook.

Twenty pounds for a job like this is fantastic, and emphasises once again that the British Council is quite out of touch with normal business matters.

I have a suggestion to make: there are dozens of publishers with first-class textbooks which they are anxious to reprint, but cannot, owing to paper restrictions.

The authorities would do well to abolish this redundant Council and distribute its paper quota among professionals who would know how to use it.

John Bull Cobbett

HOW MANY PEOPLE to-day ever trouble to real "Rural Rides"? It is a great book, by a great man. Cobbett was one of the outstanding reformers of English history.

Among other things, he founded an earlier JOHN BULL, and in it he raised a fine sound and fury against privilege in every form.

I was reminded of him this week, reading the correspondence which has followed our recent special article on the 1,500 leaseholders of the Pembroke Dock area.

My colleague the Special Commissioner, who produced the article, showed how hundreds of humble families were being faced with crippling demands for increased ground rent owing to a "blind spot" in the law.

Following the article, some leases have since been extended on fairly reasonable terms. This is not enough, but it is something.

I feel that old master Cobbett, in his downright way, would have approved of that article.

Argument

SHOULD WE DRIVE ON THE RIGHT?

In Britain we drive on the left. In America, Canada, Russia and most of Europe they drive on the right. Ought we to come into line?

for

1. The drive-on-the-left countries, although fairly numerous, are scattered and, in terms of cars and road-miles, are in a minority.
2. In an age which accepts the doctrine of "One World," uniform standards must come eventually. With every year of postponement, traffic increases and the change becomes more difficult.
3. The low accident rate of visitors here, and of British drivers abroad, proves that traffic acclimatisation is both rapid and easy.
4. When a car is driven on the right with the driving seat on the left, the pull of the stronger right hand is towards the curb, not towards the middle of the road.
5. For the English-speaking peoples to be divided on road policy is absurd. Since we have comparatively fewer cars and road-miles, the change is up to us.

against

1. Is a change necessary? Our manufacturers already have equipment for producing left-hand-drive cars for export, and owners take their cars to other countries.
2. The changeover would mean a period of years with both left- and right-hand-drive cars on the road.
3. The accident rate would increase because both motorists and pedestrians would continue for long to follow their old traffic habits.
4. Innumerable traffic lights and street signs would have to be replaced and the banking on many road curves altered.
5. Every public vehicle in the country would have to be converted. Otherwise 'buses would set down people in the middle of the road and tram passengers would either have to pass through the driver's end of the vehicle or else alight on the "other-way" tracks.

WITH MY FEET UP
by IAN FOX

Irma del Monico, the well-known spy, heavily disguised while on a secret mission to find out what the Bedouins be doing

MY PAPER TELLS ME that "Piquant revelations are expected at the forthcoming trial of Cornelia Tanzi, writer of love stories and associate of Mussolini."

COUNSEL: Were you a very close friend of Signor Mussolini?

MME. TANZI: Well, I used to call him Tootles.

COUNSEL: Do I understand that you stayed the night at the Palazzo Venezio?

MME. TANZI: Oh yes, often. But he used to snore something terrible.

High Jinks in Torquay

AS PART OF ITS post-war plans, Torquay is said to be going to ban fun fairs. It will, however, provide electric bath-chairs for visitors. I can see Torquay's thrill-crazy dowagers and retired invalids turning the promenade into a "Dodgem" track.

"Boomps - a - daisy, Colonel Fotheringay-Featherstonehaugh."

"What-ho, Duchess! I'll bump you round the breakwaters."

"Whoosh, there goes my transformer. Ha-ha, I'm a sitting bird now, eh, Colonel?"

What a Blow!

Advertisement in a daily paper: "Wanted, blowing-room Major for small blowing-room."

DEAR SIR,—I wish to apply for the job as Major in your blowing-room. At present I am only a Lieutenant, but I have a Brigadier's lungs. I can blow a seventy-mile-an-hour gale with ease and never have hiccoughs. I was for five years a blower for the advertising agents, Messrs. Own Trumpets, Ltd.—Yours faithfully, I. L. L. WIND, Blowers Green, Worcs.

Spy-Lights

THE OTHER EVENING I dialled spy double-one-oh-oh, for a chat with Irma del Monico, the well-known secret agent.

"Allo, allo," she said. "Ah, it is you, mon ami. Min telefon var out of order. The line by which Scotland Yard taps my wire had gone wrong.

"Only yesterday I returned from Paris by air. Un grand succès, oui! I brought back three wunderschön dresses, six chapeaux, and the plans of a new bomb-sight. Now adios!"

TOO SLOW FOR 1945

Grave dangers threaten us unless the work of Parliament can be hastened. In this important article, a simple remedy is suggested

IN THE KING'S SPEECH—which is really, of course, the speech of the Cabinet—we are promised legislation on many domestic issues. But Mr. Churchill has warned us bluntly that precious little of this legislation is likely to reach the Statute Book before the General Election next summer or autumn.

In that warning there is posed a problem of first-class magnitude for Parliament, the Public Service, and for the people. It is the warning of "the petty pace of things" in legislative matters.

At the moment there is a Coalition Government, dealing almost entirely with measures agreed upon between the great Parties. That is to say, the present situation in Parliament is favourable to relatively rapid legislation.

How Long Will it Take?

But, even under present conditions, it took us five months to pass the Town and Country Planning Bill, and the Prime Minister warns us that we are not likely to get through more than one major measure before this Parliament ends.

Now consider what Parliament is already committed to. It is committed to a Bill on National Insurance, a Bill on Workmen's Compensation, a Bill on National Medical Service.

There will be further Bills—or White Papers—on Civil Aviation, Post-War Monetary Policy, Agriculture, and a dozen other subjects.

Most of these Bills will be dealt with after the next Election under conditions where we shall have reverted to Government on the usual Party lines. How long will it take to deal with them, and how many more issues, each taking up Parliamentary time, will crop up meanwhile and demand attention?

This is a grave problem. Stated briefly, it is this:

Parliament, under its present procedure, and under normal conditions of Party Government, can only deal with two or three major Bills a year. But the character of the times demands that it shall deal with a dozen or more major—and scores of *minor*—Bills a year, if legislation is not to fall hopelessly behind the needs of the situation!

I might put it differently, thus: "Is Parliament, a democratic Parliament, to be strangled in the machinery of democracy? If not, how can we make Parliament work at the required speed?"

Appeal from Mr. Morrison

This, believe me, is an issue which is going to loom large in the public mind in the very near future. What are we going to do about it?

"Let Parliament deal with broad issues, and leave the Civil Service to work out the details"—urges Mr. Morrison. "No more delegated legislation!"—cry a hundred voices in Parliament and the Press. Lord Hewart attacks "The New Despotism"—by which he means the usurpation by Civil Servants of the functions of Parliament and of the Judiciary.

All right! But what are we to do? If Mr. Morrison's view be not accepted, how can we make Parliament function quickly enough to meet our social needs? Well, here are a few suggestions:

A Bill in the House of Commons goes through three main stages: Second Reading—(First Reading is purely formal)—in which the broad principles of the Bill are discussed. Committee Stage—in which the Bill is discussed line by line and clause by clause. Third Reading—when the House considers the Bill as altered and amended in Committee.

In pre-war days most Bills were referred, for their Committee Stage, from the House to a Standing Committee of the House "upstairs." The Standing Committees usually met in the morning, and so did not impinge on the time of the House, which met at 2.45 p.m. and sat till 11 p.m. or later.

During this war, Bills have had their Committee Stage "in Committee of the whole House"—which means that a lot of Parliamentary time has been consumed which, under the old system, would not have been so consumed.

The first thing, therefore, is to restore the Standing Committees!

But we must go much farther if we are to get the necessary speed in legislation. For even with the Standing Committees again functioning, the time of Parliament itself would still be hopelessly inadequate to the pace of events. What else can we do?

One Man's Plan

Well, much Parliamentary time during the year is consumed in dealing with the Departmental Estimates. Each Department has to submit to Parliament its estimated expenditure for the year, and on that Estimate any Member can raise criticism on any aspect of the Department's administration—sins of omission as well as sins of commission.

Could we not take that function from the House as a whole and relegate it to committees, with members of each Party in numbers corresponding to the relative strength of the Parties in the House—with, of course, a few of those most valuable Members of the House, the Independents!

Could we not go farther and look again at the scheme propounded years ago by Mr. F. W. Jowett, Keir Hardie's friend, the Member for Bradford?

Jowett proposed that each Minister should have associated with him a small committee of M.P.s—(similarly composed)—with whom the Minister should consult week by week.

This, thought Jowett, would give M.P.s a much greater measure of control than was involved in a debate once a year on the work of the Department concerned, and would relieve the time of the House as a whole.

Some people have suggested that we should cut out the hour of Questions to Ministers, which we have every day except on Fridays. Personally, I am against this.

The House is at its best at Question Time—and at its most democratic, too. It is good for the souls of Ministers and for the country that M.P.s should have this opportunity of interrogating the mighty day by day!

Rudolf Steiner, whose work is too little known in Britain, held that a more radical solution was required. He advocated what he called the "Three-Fold State." Just as man was a being of three elements, so to speak, composed of Body, Soul and Spirit, so, he argued, the Parliamentary machinery of a State should be threefold in character.

He would have had an Economic Parliament to deal with the economic arrangement of society—the physical problems of food, clothing, shelter, and so on; a Cultural Parliament to deal with things pertaining to the mind, like education, the wireless, the Press, and generally whatever affected the cultural life of man; and a General Parliament dealing with justice, foreign policy, the Armed Forces, and so on.

Threat to Democracy

Plainly, something has to be done to speed up our legislative machinery.

If it isn't, one of two things will happen. Either Parliament will more and more have to limit itself to the broad issues, leaving the application of them to be the subject of delegated legislation—that is, to Orders issued by Civil Servants in Government Departments.

Or Parliament will prove itself utterly unable to keep pace with the urgent requirements of the time. In that case a gap between social need and legislative capacity would develop which might, in the disturbed conditions of the post-war world, be fatal to the survival of democracy.

In short, it isn't enough to shout at Mr. Morrison. We must provide an answer to the problem which events have posed and he has formulated!

★ **W. J. BROWN, author of the article, has become one of the "Ginger Men" of this Parliament, and was largely responsible for the increase in Service pay. Son of a £2-a-week plumber, he was the fiery and active General Secretary of the Civil Service Clerical Association from 1919 to 1942**

Everyone knows the Houses of Parliament from the outside—

—but few have seen the Speaker's procession in the Commons

Now They All Speak English

The B.B.C. has taught the enslaved Continent to speak English freely

WHEN YOUNG TOMMIES arrived in France in 1939 they envied the "old sweats" of the last war who knew a few words of French.

"Young Tommy," returning to France in 1944, did not need interpreters. To his amazement he found that France had learned to speak English.

It wasn't fluent or perfect. But it was spoken with joy because it had been learned during the anxious years of German occupation when the French were looking hopefully towards Britain.

The faces of British, Canadian and American troops lit up when they realised they were not among strangers who could not understand "the lingo."

The French, you see, had listened regularly to the B.B.C.—not to the foreign language broadcasts but to the English news which carried the authority of the country from which they expected liberation.

Allied airmen, forced to bale out over French territory before D-Day, had the same pleasant surprise. French patriots had perfected their English so that they should not be caught in traps by German agents-provocateurs. French girls who had looked blandly at Germans addressing them in good French were eager to talk to British boys—in English.

It is the same in Belgium. When members of the Belgian underground army, the White Army, recently demonstrated in Brussels they carried banners with English inscriptions.

"We want to help our Allies!" some of the streamers said. "We want all patriots united!" said others. One, in almost pathetically imperfect English, announced: "We want to exterminate 5th Colonists!"

Wives Tackling Czech

They address themselves to Britain—that is why they want to speak English. Never before in Europe's history has the English language conquered so completely.

A daughter of a friend of mine, serving in Holland, has just received a letter from a girl with whose family he had been billeted in a small village. The little Dutch girl is twelve years old. Her letter, in excellent English, describes the joy of a Dutch family at the British soldier's presence and their ability to talk to him in his own language.

Poles, Slovaks, Greeks, Italians—they all have learned to speak our language.

Thousands of British girls are about to carry on this great crusade of a language which forms the bonds of a deeper and vital union. They are the British-born wives of refugees from a dozen Continental countries and are preparing to go to Europe as ambassadresses of their own country. I have seen them learning how to cook in Continental fashion and to speak Polish, Greek, Czech, French and Dutch.

No Language Barrier

But they have already taught their foreign husbands how to speak English, how to love the country which is their own.

It does not end there. As British troops advance into Germany they bring with them English as the official language. Germans who have listened to British broadcasts for a long time will not find it difficult to converse with the conquerors.

There is no limit now to the language of the British Isles. And there is no limit to the sentiments which can only be adequately expressed in English and which the Continent is adopting eagerly to its own advantage.

WILLI FRISCHAUER.

Can Sir Walter satisfy the young people of the Services?

OPEN LETTERS

Rt. Hon. Sir Walter Womersley, M.P.,

Minister of Pensions

DEAR SIR WALTER,—The Conservative Party's seven-point programme, on which it will fight the next General Election, makes brave reading. So has every Party's appeal for votes in the past. So will every political programme of the future. The poor elector has been promised so much so often by the few and has received so little that nowadays he prefers practical plans to stirring slogans.

When you outlined the Conservative plan for building and stabilising the new Britain you emphasised the resolve to encourage private enterprise as the main road back to prosperity.

But is it the main road to prosperity? Has it proved so in the past? Memory recalls those dark, bitter days after the last war, when private enterprise, untrammelled and unopposed, brought Britain idleness, apathy and despair.

Ask the Jarrow plater if private enterprise is the main road to prosperity. Ask the Tees-side puddler. Ask the Oldham weaver. Ask the South Wales miner. Ask the Sheffield steelworker.

I know their answers. I know that the iron of suffering entered their souls, and that the memory of that suffering is still fresh to-day.

The country can have no assured stability, no industrial progress on an even keel, without some measure of State control. Your Party accepts without question plans to control, through National Insurance and National Health Service, the lives of individual citizens. Your Party glories in the war time achievements of British industry—a record of production made possible only by control.

Yet the Big Business interests so closely allied to your Party, and a dominating factor behind the political scene, are obviously resolved to battle for a return to the bad old days of unrestricted and competitive industry and commerce, with the worker and consumer back to their rôles of pawns.

This proposal is not good enough for me. It is not good enough for anyone who wants to see the new Britain a living fact and not a political theory.

Industry cannot be allowed again to lead the nation to the very brink of economic and social disaster. And there are millions like myself who will fight—and vote—to make such a threat impossible.—JOHN BULL.

Lady Astor,

M.P. for Plymouth (Sutton Division)

DEAR LADY ASTOR,—I can't recall how many tilts I have had at you in the momentous twenty-five years you have sat in the Commons. We have differed on many occasions, agreed to disagree on many problems, and in wider issues affecting the social life of the nation have been often at variance.

Now you have announced that your Parliamentary career is approaching its end. You will not contest the next election "because my husband does not want me to."

So to-day, as one of your critics, I make the *amende honorable*. Never have I doubted your sincerity. Nor have I ever suspected you of political opportunism. Above all you have never failed to command my respect and admiration. May your retirement be happy and your memory kind.—JOHN BULL.

P.S.—The House is going to miss you.

Major-General G. S. Szlumper,

Director-General, Supply Services, Ministry of Supply

DEAR GENERAL,—As a former general manager of the Southern Railway, your views on post-war transport carry weight. And I hope that your recent statement that "after the war all transport in Britain should be run as a sort of public corporation with pooled funds" carries that weight in the right quarters.

Common-sense—plus the memory of pre-war muddle, wrangling, and wasteful rivalry—points to the value of post-war co-ordination of all means of transport.

That, it seems to me, is the only way to achieve efficiency and, in turn, promote effective distribution of goods and supplies.—JOHN BULL.

Rt. Hon. R. S. Hudson, M.P.,

Minister of Agriculture

DEAR MR. HUDSON,—Victory, when it comes, will not be due alone to our fighting men and our munition workers. In very great measure it will have been achieved by the men who have tilled, sown and harvested the rich soil of Britain.

They have performed wonders in increasing home-grown food supplies. Thousands of them came out of well-earned rest and retirement to help solve the labour problem of wartime farming. Many are over seventy. They are Grand Old Men, worthy of the highest praise.

A suggestion: Why don't you send to these aged and willing workers over seventy a personal message of thanks? Do it by letter, and let the old men know that their work did help to set us on the road to victory.—JOHN BULL.

Sir Harold Webbe,

M.P., Abbey Division, Westminster

DEAR SIR HAROLD,—Do you really believe that Public Relations Officers in Government Departments are propagandists who matter?

Your insinuation that these officials hand out "dope" to lazy journalists is an insult to every newspaper editor and executive, who, despite the throttling difficulties of restriction and censorship, have managed to keep their readers well-informed.

Do you know where most Ministry "hand-outs" go? I'll tell you. The waste paper basket. And every editor will support my statement.—JOHN BULL.

Human Machine

PERSONAL OVERHAUL

EVERY NOW AND AGAIN we should go in for a personal overhaul. We should take a look at just *what* we do, just *how* we do it, and just *why* we do it.

We all of us do so many quite useless things solely through custom. It would be a very surprising state of affairs if a little self-examination would not reveal at least one thing we could do better.

Maybe we are priding ourselves on being the possessors of "an open mind"? Good—so far: but for what? G. K. Chesterton once sagely remarked that it was not much good opening the mind unless we closed it again on something solid!

Maybe we are too complacent, too tolerant—you can be, you know, however great virtue tolerance may be. Maybe we are the opposite, too touchy, too irritable. In either case there is a cause for which we should search; and we should not stop searching until we have found what is wrong and tried to remedy it.

Perhaps we fear the future too much—maybe we have too much respect and reverence for the past: a little overhaul would help us to restore a better balance to our outlook on people and things.

A great many things are going to change. We must learn to change with them, or we run the risk of being misfits in a modern world. The human machine, like every other, should be constantly overhauled and kept tuned up, ready for whatever tests the coming years may impose.

PORTRAITS—No. 4 by A. G. GARDINER

BEVIN LIKES BIG TASKS

He will not become Prime Minister. But he will play a big part on the political stage. Starting work at 9d. a week, he has proved himself the greatest organiser of our age

THE APPROACH OF A General Election is turning men's minds to the political scene. In the presence of a Parliament that has lasted longer than any Parliament for three centuries, an election is imperative.

Whether the time is ripe for a return to unrestricted Party warfare is another matter. On that the happenings in Greece, in Belgium, in Poland and elsewhere throw a note of warning. Germany has made Europe a shambles. The defeat of Germany must not turn it into a bear garden.

Much depends on the lead this country gives to the world. We have not fought this war for ourselves alone, nor must we fashion the peace for ourselves alone.

We have risen above Party in the war. It remains to be seen whether as a nation we can rise above Party in healing the wounds of the war.

The answer rests less with the Party that is in power than with the leadership.

For this reason I am less concerned about which Party will win the election than with the men who will be charged with the duty of doing the job.

On this principle I propose to pass in review some of the actors, regardless of Party, whom we may expect to play a foremost part in the next scene.

And if my first choice is Ernest Bevin, it is not because I expect Labour to win the election, or because, in that event, I expect him to be Prime Minister.

You Can't Ignore Him

I do not think he would be. What is more, I am quite sure he would not wish to be. But whether in office or not, I expect him to play a powerful part on the stage.

For he is one of those men who make the part powerful by their own natural force. You cannot be unaware of his presence, even if, as Humpty-Dumpty would say, "You try with both hands."

But the impression he makes is not dimensional, but impalpable. There is an elemental something about him which you cannot ignore.

I have heard him likened to Bradlaugh, and in mass and in the weight of his fist he is not unlike that formidable man.

But the parallel does not go much beyond this. Bradlaugh was one of the greatest orators I can recall. Bevin is not an orator. And having no vain illusions about himself, he does not pretend to be.

He respects learning, and knows how to use the learned, but he has no scholarship, and would perish rather than affect a quality he does not possess.

He has that plainness of mind which distrusts glibness, and I suspect that he would agree with Lord Baldwin that "rhetoric is the harlot of the arts."

This does not mean that he has failed in the cut-and-thrust of Parliament. He might well have done so, for he was fifty-five before he entered the House, and he was sixty before he sat on the Treasury bench. There has not been an occasion since when he has seemed out of place there.

It is worthy of note that the two most valuable members of the Government next to Mr. Churchill himself—*i.e.*, Mr. Bevin and Sir John Anderson—are neither of them spell-binders. Nor are they clever politicians.

They are something better and rarer than that. They are quite emphatically Statesmen, and Statesmen of a high order.

There are occasions, when he is stirred, on which the gift of great speech descends on him and then the sheer force of the man can be moving and eloquent.

I remember such an occasion at one of the Dorchester luncheons. He was the guest, and delivered a speech full of facts and figures.

Then something seemed to stir in him, and, putting aside his notes, he burst into an impassioned identification of himself with the purpose of the war and a moving dedication of himself to the avenging of his lost comrades.

Jam on Sunday

But I repeat that it is not on the decorative side that his virtues must be sought. How should it be? His virtues spring from a harsh apprenticeship to life.

Born at the village of Winsford in Somerset in 1330, he lost both parents in childhood, and at ten years of age was working on a farm for 9d. a week, paid quarterly.

"We worked seven days a week," he once told an audience at Plymouth; "but we always knew Sunday from weekdays because then they gave us jam on the pudding."

Migrating to Bristol, he became a page-boy at a restaurant, later a tram conductor, a shop assistant, a vanman successively. He knew poverty, unemployment and hunger. "One had to get food, so I stole."

At 23 he was the secretary of the unemployed movement in Bristol. At 30 he joined the old Dockers' Union, and was elected a delegate.

It was then that the native power of the man found itself. He was not embittered or resentful, as he might have been. His robust sense saved him from mere querulousness, and his genius for constructive action came into play.

In spite of the work of Tillett and Burns in the late '80's, the condition of the dockers was still a national scandal. Bevin set himself to wipe out that scandal, and to transform the dockers from an irregular and ill-paid employment to the security of good wages when there is work, and a minimum wage when work is lacking.

He became known as "the Dockers' K.C.," and his masterly marshalling of the facts before the Shaw Inquiry in 1920 resulted in a national agreement which is still the foundation of labour conditions in the dock industry of this country.

Subsequently his organising genius transformed the Dockers' Union into the Transport and General Workers' Union, now the largest trade union in the world, with a membership of a million and a quarter.

Into this vast union he merged no fewer than 36 minor organisations to the immense advantage of each.

Mr. Churchill's Inspiration

And he crowned this striking achievement by the building of Transport House, in which the Transport Workers, the Trade Union Congress and the National Labour Party share an impressive habitation.

This record gives the clue to Bevin's genius. It is the genius of the organiser. His gift is not talking, but doing. He loves to be given a task, the bigger the better.

It must be a task in which his sympathies are engaged—a task which links him up with his class and his past.

He does not aspire to lead the nation. He wants to lead Labour out of its Egypt.

No stroke of Churchill's in those critical days of '40 was more inspired than when he summoned Bevin to the most difficult office in his Ministry.

He knew that the war could not be won without the full and enthusiastic support of Labour,

Ernest Bevin as seen by George Whitelaw

And his acute sense of character told him who was the man for that Cyclopean job.

And Bevin, who loves power, and knows his true limits, seized the offer with avidity. "I am thrilled with this job," he said at the time, adding regretfully, "I wish I was 10 years younger."

Nothing in this marvellously well-conducted war has exceeded the triumph of Ernest Bevin.

Through his enlargement and improvement of the Ministry of Labour, and especially of the Employment Exchanges, he has achieved the miracle of enrolment described in the White Paper.

And the work is far from completion. For Bevin is now adapting the Ministry to the tasks of resettlement which will come with the peace, and after resettlement to the tasks of industrial selection.

He's Looking Ahead

"No more blind alleys." "No more square pegs in round holes." These are the goals to which he is moving.

For to him "The Dignity of Labour" is never a mere phrase. He is planning for the future. The coming generation of educated and healthy boys and girls are to find the callings appropriate to their gifts and aptitudes.

And the women are not forgotten. They are to be allowed to fill the highest industrial positions for which they can be fitted.

There is much more I should wish to say, but I must close.

I must, however, record one tribute by a leading official of the Ministry. I can vouch for it.

"Do you like your Minister?" he was asked. "Like him?" was the reply. "He is the only Minister we have ever had. For the first time we have a chief who really leads us.

"One who knows what he is after and exceeds all of us, not only in zeal, but in practical experience and resourcefulness. Under Bevin the Ministry of Labour is transformed. It is a new and more efficient Department."

Bevin is one of the great forces in British politics. He is no revolutionary, but he is a bold and resolute reformer in the great tradition of British development. He is a great Democrat, but no Demagogue. He is a practical Pacifist, but no dreamer.

He has a great work to do for this country. But I share his wish. Would that he were ten years younger.

NEXT WEEK : SIR WILLIAM BEVERIDGE

WEAPONS OF THE

In the second article of his series on espion in this war, DONALD STOKES explain been highly secret. Mr. Stokes, author of th Behind Victory," has obtained his informatio

EL ALAMEIN. When the historians come to write the history of this war, it's more than likely they'll put the turning point in the Allies' fortunes at this desert spot.

Certainly those who study the Intelligence work behind the winning of battles will agree that one of the best feats goes back to El Alamein.

There was a perfect example of how modern espionage is carried on with scientific instruments, instead of the more dangerous and less accurate methods of the old-type spy.

Rommel had massed considerable numbers of his 88-mm. guns and howitzers behind minefields—death-traps a mile deep. One of the first problems for Montgomery—General then, Field-Marshal now—when he took command of the Eighth Army was to find a way accurately to pinpoint Rommel's massed guns, so that our artillery could eliminate them.

An instrument called the "sound camera" was used. It's a device extremely sensitive to sound-waves, which automatically records the volume and source of any noise. Several of these instruments were set up in our battle-line.

Every time the German guns opened fire the "sound cameras" took record; the operators were skilled in trigonometrical calculation, and after a swift check-up by field-phone they were able to pin-point each gun's position.

This wasn't enough; to destroy those German guns for sure meant that the artillery would have to know how Rommel's guns were sited, and what sort of earth-works protected them. On this information depended whether we used howitzer or flat-trajectory fire.

So another instrument was brought into use; this was the "flash-spotter," a device which records on a sensitised plate the firing of enemy guns. Specialist Intelligence officers were able to interpret these plates so accurately that in most cases not only the siting but the calibre of the German guns was determined.

An elaborate map was prepared for our gunners, indicating the position and type of each enemy gun. The last phase was a last-minute aerial reconnaissance to spot any guns which had been moved.

Telling the Time in France

Hundreds of our 25-pounder guns, the greatest concentration of artillery then seen in the war, flared into a drumfire cannonade at 10 p.m. on November 1, 1942; scores of the German guns were wiped out. Modern Intelligence had won a great victory for Monty.

These methods of artillery spotting were improved on steadily till, when the cross-Channel duels between long-range artillery were at their height, the officer commanding our big guns at Dover was helped by a variety of scientific aids which amaze the lay mind.

Besides "sound cameras" and "flash-spotters," he had infra-red ray cameras capable of photographing the time on town-hall clocks miles inland in France.

Most important of all, he had a number of meteorologists who traced squirming lines on green maps, and made slide-rule calculations which were adjusted every hour as fresh information came chattering over the teleprinter from the Meteorological Office. Every variation of wind-drift and temperature in the sub-stratosphere had to be allowed for, in order to hit the German guns.

Science Put Men Out of Date

This alone shows how far Intelligence had travelled since the last war when, to find the location of "Big Bertha" which was shelling Paris, five operatives were dropped by parachute behind the German lines with orders to hunt the countryside for the "monster."

To-day there is no branch of the Services which does not depend on science in its efforts to get accurate Intelligence. Modern weapons have so speeded up the pace of war that the Directors of Intelligence *have* had to find scientific ways of keeping pace.

To drive home the contrast between the old-fashioned spy and the modern spy-technician—there have been numerous instances in the last few months of information being brought out of Germany by agents who risked their lives to cross guarded frontiers; yet, when their information was checked against the latest intelligence gained by scientific means, it was found to be completely out of date.

Flying Spies at Work

Before we examine each Intelligence Directorate in turn, let us deal with one aspect of scientific espionage which is common to them all. Every convoy, every aircraft, every gun, depends on the weather. On the advice of his meteorological experts, General Eisenhower postponed D-day for 24 hours; that was but one proof of how the weather is arbiter in this war of swift movement.

Sir Nelson Johnson, chief of the Meteorological Office, directs the worldwide network of observers and scientists which governs the movements of our armies and fleets.

Remarkable instruments have been devised to obtain the best knowledge of the weather. Sir Nelson showed me one of these, an instrument called a radiosonde.

This is an automatic radio transmitter, of remarkably delicate and compact construction; it is about the size of an ordinary alarm-clock, carried up into the sub-stratosphere by a balloon. A robot device makes it transmit to earth, at regular intervals, statistics on temperatures, humidity and wind strength.

On the Intelligence it provides may depend whether we bomb the Ruhr to-night, whether a convoy shall set sail.

A team of "weather spies" sets out every morning over the Atlantic, in specially adapted 'planes which are crammed with scientific instruments. There is a special aneroid barometer, various thermometers and a psychrometer which measures the humidity of the air; if these "spies" can detect a coming change in the weather, it may mean a battle is won for us.

The greatest of the revolutions has been led by the R.A.F. Every day our 'planes now fly over the very heart of the enemy, photographing his secrets; back at base these photos are translated into valuable facts by teams of men, not all of whom are in uniform.

Some are industrial experts who answer questions like this: "Four of the assembly sheds and the machine-tool shop in this factory have suffered class B damage. How much will production have suffered?"

The "flying spies" in the reconnaissance aircraft carry new kinds of cameras. Some are stereoscopic; in other words, they take twin photos, which, when looked at through special instruments, give the impression of depth. The cameras vary in length between 5 in. and 40 in. focal length. It is necessary to have these remarkable magnifications because of the height, sometimes six miles up, from which the photos are taken. At that height the planes cannot be heard from the ground.

Your Summer Holiday Helped

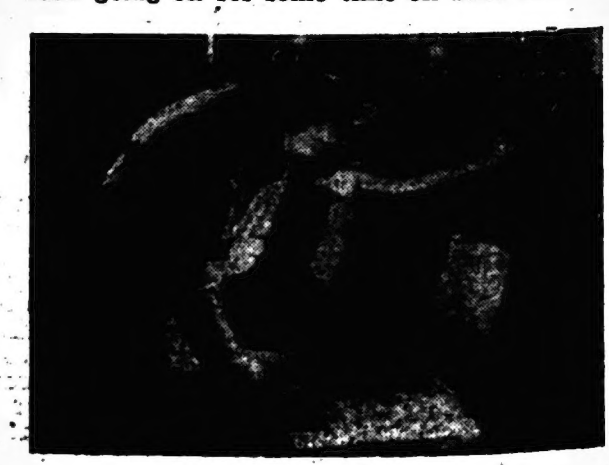
Infra-red ray cameras are now often used to take pictures through cloud or mist or smoke-screens. Other types of cameras have been evolved which can photograph in complete darkness.

Yet another type is the choryll-filter camera, which shows up clearly whether an objective is camouflaged or not; the green or camouflage paint gives a different effect, in this type of camera, to the green of foliage, and the most cunningly concealed objective is revealed.

There are automatic rotary machines dealing with the reconnaissance photos in the Interpretation Unit which can turn out nearly a thousand prints an hour, a continuous stream of pictures of the enemy's nerve centres.

Film cameras of a special type are now fitted to many bombers and fighters; the record they make of gun-flashes, searchlights and bomb-hits is extremely useful. Experiments have been going on for some time on both sides to

Having pin-pointed his target, the R.A.F. photographer presses the button of his film camera



Holiday snaps, sent by the public and developed by Wrens, have had great military value

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our latest scientific instruments for
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lled the stereo-comparograph map;
it is an aerial "strip" photo.
by a highly complicated process,

ong magnifying lenses, an expert
taken aerial pictures of Germany

the height contours of the land are marked, with identification control points for artillery spotters; camouflaged objectives are indicated, and symbols are printed to show what the enemy dispositions are in each section.

This type of map can be printed very quickly, and provides commanders with an up-to-the-minute picture of the battleground.

Radio, naturally, has revolutionised Intelligence methods, particularly in the "running commentary" sent back by Army reconnaissance aircraft to their bases. Still more so has it given the strategic commanders an almost constant stream of information from each tactical headquarters. But radio has its dangers, as well as its uses.

The greatest care has to be taken to ensure that the enemy does not intercept any of our messages. The process of coding is often too slow in modern battle conditions, and the Germans and Japanese sometimes send out battle orders "in clear," but it is obvious that, generally, this is too risky.

When Churchill Rings Up F.D.R.

Science has come to our rescue with the "scrambler," a device which jumbles the words into an unintelligible whine to everybody except the person at the receiving end, who has an "unscrambling device."

This instrument has also been adapted for telephones, and every important 'phone in the country is now fitted with one; when Mr. Churchill 'phones, for example, every word goes through the "scrambler."

New types of radio transmitter have been constructed for the use of our patrols which creep out to observe enemy dispositions. Some of the transmitting-sets which our ground patrols take out with them are no larger than a cigar-box.

The soldier has a "pick-up" clamped to his throat which conducts his words even if he only whispers them; they are radioed back to base, and amplified into an ordinary conversational voice.

The precision engineering of radio technicians has reached such a pitch now that transmitters have been built, small enough to go in an attaché-case yet powerful enough to be heard thirty miles away. It needs little imagination to realise that if one of these instruments can be concealed by agents in an enemy headquarters, valuable information can be obtained. But that is a phase of Intelligence I will deal with later.

NEXT WEEK: THE BIG THREE OF INTELLIGENCE

Kesselring, and boastfully gesturing Rommel, lost Africa largely because of the "sound camera"

Hannen Swaffer Talks

ABOUT PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

CONSERVATIVES ALREADY BOAST that they have won the next election. Because their opponents are all fighting one another, they say, split votes will let in at least 100 Tories who otherwise would have no chance.

Last-minute efforts will be made, both by Liberals and Communists, to present a united front.

But Labour is not only afraid of "Communists who take their orders from Moscow." It remembers how, during its two minority Governments, it was held back by anti-Socialist Liberals by whose leave it remained in office.

Disunited Front

A few years before the war, Sir Walter Layton, a Liberal economist of high intelligence, came to me—at L.G.'s suggestion, he said—to ask my opinion as to the possibility of a united front. I told him it wouldn't happen, and why.

I remember, too, the anger that A. J. Cummings showed when, a few weeks after Arthur Henderson's death, I said to him: "A united front is right as a theory, but impossible in practice."

"In *theory*!" he sneered. "Don't you realise it might stop the war?"

Yes, I knew that. But I also faced up to the facts.

The Slippery Slope

The plain truth is that, in almost all essentials, Liberals, Communists and Labour men are at variance. Even were a formula of agreement over policy possible, I doubt if it would survive more than a few weeks of coalition in office.

Unless a miracle happens, the post-war situation, because of human nature, will resemble that of 1937. The forces of Reaction, those which have already let us into calamitous blunders in Italy and Greece, expect to remain in power—and with effects on the world that I dread to contemplate.

In Praise of Attlee

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT, at the eve-of-a-session dinner that he gave his colleagues, that Churchill would go so far as to say of Attlee that but for his competence as Deputy Premier he could not have gone overseas?

Yet, in private conversation, I have heard more than one member of the War Cabinet wax enthusiastic over Attlee's wisdom in counsel and say that, beneath that reserve which prevents his success on the platform, there is much knowledge and understanding.

If only his personality was as great as his honesty of purpose . . .

The Churchill Family

EDWARD COOK, an independent film producer, went to the Ministry of Works with a view to getting material for a picture on Housing.

George Hicks, the Under-Secretary, whom he saw is a very friendly person.

"Perhaps you would like a few words with the new Minister," he said. So, taking him into the next room, he introduced him to Duncan Sandys, the Premier's son-in-law.

"Perhaps you could be induced to appear in the picture, sir?" suggested Cook.

"Yes, I might consider it," replied Sandys.

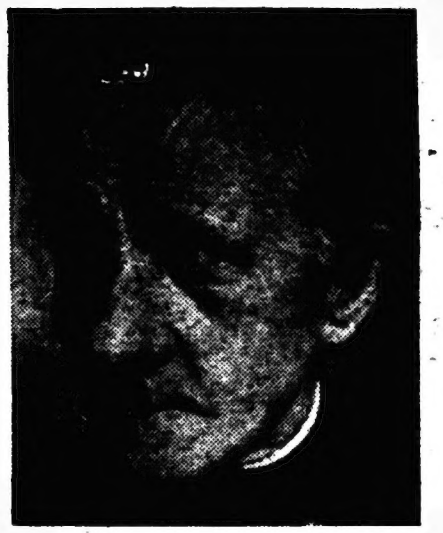
"And perhaps we could have your brother-in-law in the picture, too?" went on the film producer.

"Who is my brother-in-law?" He was wondering, perhaps, what Randolph Churchill had to do with Housing.

But the film producer had an idea about using a stage star.

"Vic Oliver," he explained.

Then they all laughed.



He dreads a repetition of 1937

A Very Tame Tiger

THEY MAY CALL Sir John Anderson "the Bengal Tiger." But Jennie Adamson, the woman M.P., who mothers war orphans, will have none of it.

One of her constituents, it seems, was a girl whose fiancé, first unemployed and then on a small wage, could not afford to buy her a ring until he saved up his Army pay and then asked a relative to buy one in New York.

When it arrived, the girl was faced with a tax of £27 19s. 9d.!

How on earth could she pay?

Jennie wrote to the stern and cold Chancellor.

He said that, according to the rules, the charge must be paid. But, for once, he would waive the rules!

"Who can say that Sir John is hard-hearted?" she asked me.

They All Want Boys!

ALFRED DENVILLE, the ex-actor and repertory producer, who is now an M.P., listened while Jennie went on to say that she has lots of girl war-orphans awaiting adoption, but that everyone wants boys.

"Jennie, if you've a dark boy, from five to eight years old, with a touch of olive in his skin, I'll adopt him," said Denville. "I want something to make a fuss of in my old age. He'd have fine prospects."

Perhaps, like the M.P., he would start as little Willie Carlyle in "East Lynne."

Can Fay Compton Iron?

FAY COMPTON, one of our most talented actresses, is now scoring a great success in "No Medals," a play about how British women carry on in time of war.

But, even so, she does not escape criticism from the housewives who are flocking by the thousand to see themselves personified in her attractiveness.

"She can't iron," was heard whispered all round by a man who sat in the midst of many women.

According to them, she was not smoothing out a piece of cloth, but patting it with the iron. I wouldn't have noticed.

"It's an ungodly hour for a visit," said Matron from the door, "but I've brought your husband to see you"

The Seven Crises of Hercules Smith

IN THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW

Hercules has to make up his mind between missing an appointment of great business importance, or keeping the engagement and risking private tragedy ...

by

HARRY HEARSON

ILLUSTRATED BY SHOWELL

THE DOCTOR came out of the bathroom, wiping his hands on the lace-fringed towel. Joan had whispered to Hercules where to find it, and to put it out ready on the edge of the bath. Now he recalled, for no particular reason, how pleased she had been when he had given her the towel for a birthday present two or three years ago, before John had been born, and before they had taken over the little bookshop and moved into the flat above it.

Now the doctor was saying something quietly, and Hercules pulled himself together to listen.

"I'd rather like to have a second opinion, Mr. Smith," the doctor was saying. "It might be advisable to move your wife to a nursing home."

Hercules was scared by the suggestion, and glared quickly at the bedroom door and away again. "Is—is it something serious, doctor?" he asked.

"I'm rather afraid the chill has got to her lungs. I'd like to be sure about it, you understand, and in a nursing home she could have more attention. So if that's settled I'll bring a specialist along to-morrow morning." And he picked up his bag.

As Hercules showed him down the steep flight of stairs and out through the shop, he was searching for words to express an awkward question.

"Er—the specialist, doctor. Could you—do you know what his fee will be?"

The doctor shot him a quick, kindly glance. "I should say probably five guineas."

"I see." Hercules gulped. "And do I—shall I pay him when he comes? I—I'm not sure what——"

"That is the usual thing." The doctor spoke tactfully to put Hercules at his ease. Then he stepped out into the raw February air.

Hercules felt very young and alone as he climbed the stairs again and tiptoed into the bedroom. Joan was lying propped up on the pillows, her face hot, and traces of tears in her eyes. She had gone to bed two days ago, and since then Hercules had been carrying on in a daze, trying to look after Joan, and two-year-old John, and the shop.

"What did the doctor say, dear?" Joan had turned her head on the pillow as he came in, and spoke in a weak voice.

Hercules knelt beside the bed, forcing a smile. "It's a bit of a chill, darling," he told her. "But it—it seems to have gone to your chest. They're coming up in the morning to see you again, and perhaps we'll have you in a nursing home for a few days." He paused, to steady his voice. "They'll be able to look after you better than I can, sweetheart."

Joan turned away her face. "I don't want to go away, Hercules," she murmured. "I want to stay here. And besides," she turned her face restlessly to him again, and he could see that she was worried, "we'll never be able to pay the fees."

"Oh yes we shall," said Hercules with more confidence in his voice than he felt. "Don't forget this old man I'm going to see about his library on Friday."

They took Joan away in an ambulance the next afternoon. Hercules stood at the shop door and watched it driven away. He couldn't see it very clearly.

There hadn't been enough money in the till, and he had had to go to the bank early to take out a few pounds to pay the specialist and the ambulance. Joan had clung to him when he had kissed her good-bye, and her last words had been that he and John must have their meals regularly, and what to give John, and so on

Somehow Hercules had managed to take it all in, though everything that had happened after the specialist had spoken to him had happened under a vast blanket of worry which had materialised out of the word "pneumonia."

Now, as Hercules stepped back into the shop, he felt a sudden revulsion for its contents. He was sure, now, that they ought never to have risked their savings to set up business.

Perhaps Joan hadn't been having enough to eat. It was a horrible thought.

Hercules was up and down the stairs all that day, dividing his attention between John and the shop bell. It was not until the boy was safely in bed, and the woman next door had come in to keep an eye on him, that Hercules was able to close the shop and hurry by tube to the nursing home

They let him see Joan for ten minutes. She was very hot, and worried about John, but he told her everything he had done, and she seemed more satisfied.

"DON'T WORRY, DARLING," he implored her. "I'll do everything you say, and I'll come every evening to see you, and—in a few days you'll be able to come home again and see how well I've managed." He smiled triumphantly as if they were playing a make-believe game to test out his abilities as housekeeper. Joan pressed his hand.

It was on the Wednesday evening that the doctor told him the crisis would occur probably on the Friday.

"But—but—" Hercules felt momentarily beaten. He gazed imploringly at the doctor as if he could alter the progress of the infection. "I've got to be away on Friday," he said unhappily. "I can't—I ought to—"

His voice tailed off, and for a moment he saw everything arrayed against him. He *had* to keep that appointment in the country. It was their only chance to make the money to pay the doctor and the nursing home.

Hercules pulled himself together, managed a smile of sorts, and went in to see his wife.

Thursday was a dreadful day.

For one thing, John was fractious, and for another there were a lot of customers. Not profitable ones, unfortunately. They seemed to be confined to two classes—the people who never paid more than 1s. 6d. for a second-hand book, and subscribers coming in to change books in the small library which he ran as an adjunct to the bookselling. They asked silly questions, and Hercules, already weighted down almost unbearably by the knowledge that soon he must choose between staying near the nursing home or keeping the morrow's appointment, once or twice almost broke down under the strain of being polite and looking cheerful.

He could see no middle way out of the mess. If he didn't keep the appointment it would do the business a lot of harm, to say nothing of leaving them almost penniless now, when they needed the money. And he couldn't talk to his potential client because the old man, for some weird reason, refused to have a telephone in his house. Besides, he had fixed the appointment, long ago, as the only possible day.

So the appointment stood, whether he kept it or not—and Hercules, visualising the keeping of it, saw himself marooned in a strange house, talking to this old man, whoever he was, while Joan, miles beyond his reach, lay tossing in bed and calling for him.

JOAN WAS VERY FEVERISH when he saw her that evening, and her breathing sounded harsh and painful. He sat down beside the bed and held her hand, and talked to her about John and the shop, and what they would all do when she came back.

Once or twice she tried to smile, but all the time he could see that she was worried, and presently she squeezed his hand hard in the middle of something he was saying, and looked up at him pleadingly.

"It's Friday to-morrow, isn't it, dear?" she asked him.

"Eh? Why, yes, sweetheart. What did you——?"

"Friday," she whispered, making the word sound important. "Your appointment. Mr. Hercules Smith, the bookseller, travels into the country to visit an influential client." She smiled again, and watched him anxiously. "You are going, dear, aren't you?" she asked him.

Hercules smiled feebly, and swallowed. "There's nothing to be nervous about."

n reassured him. "But do you think really will let you sell his library? 're so young, really, and he could find s of old-established firms."

'll be all right, darling. Don't get it was old Connor who recom-nded me to him. And I've swotted a lot of prices and things, so I can nd frightfully efficient." He squeezed hand, and bit his lip before speaking ain. "But if I go, darling, I shan't be e to come and see you to-morrow, and nd—"

NEVER MIND," Joan whispered. "I shall be all right. And Mrs. Brown looking after John for the night while 're away at this appointment, isn't ?" Hercules nodded.

"Well, then," Joan said, "you catch early train back on Saturday morn-and come and see me before you go the shop. How's that?" She lay k on the pillows, tired by the effort talking.

"Right!" said Hercules.

Joan smiled up at him, and for a brief ment he hung on the smile, storing up against—against—

"Au revoir, sweetheart," he said, bend-quickly over the bed to kiss her and pass his hand over her hot forehead. The train seemed maddeningly slow. rcules had got out of his bed in the nge country house in the darkness early morning to catch it. He had a bad night, worrying, and there been no time to telephone from the tion.

Anyway, he told himself, he had done right thing. Thursday evening had rn him that Joan would have been rly wretched if he had broken the pointment. Whatever happened, it right to try and keep Joan happy. ut doing the right thing didn't pro-t one from a continual nagging iety. Now that the money side of business was safely disposed of, it ted pitifully trivial compared to n's illness. But there, again, Joan n't look at it like that. It wasn't a ality to her.

t was, indeed, his knowledge of Joan's ired of debt that had upheld Hercules his discussion with the old man; had bled him to concentrate his attention it to such purpose that the whole ng had gone off with an ease he had er dreamed of. Though come to con-er it, the whole interview now took the semblance of a dream against the background of his anxiety. . . .

RCULES EXTRAVAGANTLY took a taxi from the station to the nursing home. was shown straight to the matron's m.

"It's all right, Mr. Smith," she ened to tell him. "She's going to better."

ercules took hold of the edge of a e, and shut his eyes.

he matron smiled on him in a herly way. "Your wife seemed h happier after you'd seen her on rsday evening," she said. "She ned to have stopped worrying about ething. It helped a lot, and she e through the crisis better than we dared to hope.

"Then—well," the matron went on, may seem an unkind thing to say, we were glad you didn't come last t to disturb her, for she slept solidly m the late afternoon until about an r ago. She is stronger already." matron stood up. "You'll want to her." And she shepherded Hercules g to Joan's room.

"This is an ungodly hour for visitors," told Joan from the door, "but I've ught your husband to see you."

ercules almost ran to greet the e on the pillows.

fter a few moments Joan held him v from her. "And how," she asked iously, "did the bookseller fare with important country client?"

ercules told her.

ubsequently the doctor asked him ingly for the prescription of the tonic had brought in with him that rning.

These books make news

THE LIGHT THAT DIDN'T FAIL

From "Wonders of Salvage" the reviewer picks out a story in which a girl's courage beat the sea

GATHERING EVERYTHING in its path, the gale drove the ships, the birds and the sea the way it went. Boiling surf leapt the 60 ft. of the lighthouse tower and tried to blot out the light, but the light remained, the one steady thing in that shifting maelstrom.

Rhythmically it flashed with a separate life of its own, and the great glass cage was the brain. For as Langton knew, this was not just a structure of steel and concrete. For him the Bembridge lighthouse *lived*.

Ten days had dragged away. Ten days when, every other day, it seemed the gale could not possibly last. Yet still it roared.

March 17 dawned with a wild, grey light and scudding clouds. Perhaps to-day. . . . But by twelve o'clock Langton knew it was no good.

No Reply by Telephone

Once more they went about their routine jobs. Once more his wife and their fifteen-year-old daughter burnished the lamp, set the heavy weights of the clock which kept the light flashing.

The weights ran up and down inside the central column of the tower. They were wound up by hand from a platform outside the lamp-room. Two slender ladders ran from top to toe of the lighthouse and the second ladder climbed outside the tower. It didn't mean much to a man like Langton, who had scaled it a hundred times. It didn't mean much—then.

Later that afternoon he thought he would telephone the forts down the coast. This lighthouse was part of the defences of Portsmouth. And while the wind ran like a maniac, at the slim length of the lighthouse he tried to get through.

No reply. Normally he would have found a simple explanation. Now there seemed something sinister in it. He could not know that a ship had driven out of Bembridge Harbour, caught up the telephone cables and snapped them. He only knew that without the telephone they were completely cut off in a way they had never been before.

The spray and clouds blotted out the coast. The sky pressed down on the sea. The gale reached new heights.

By Friday there was practically

Isolated by storm for three days and nights, a young girl kept the great lamp burning

nothing left in their food store. Langton climbed the ladder, checked the lamp. The great seas thundered down below and a faint tremor ran through the lighthouse. Supposing. . . . Supposing. . . . Some time in the life of every keeper the fear came up. . . . But Langton knew every crevice, every scar, every stain of this big fellow. . . .

On Saturday there was half a loaf of bread left between them. "It's bound to quieten down to-day," said Langton. Towards noon what seemed a miracle happened. It did begin to quieten.

She Was Left Alone

They snatched the chance immediately. They launched their tiny boat and managed to get across to the island. Ethel, their daughter, remained behind. When they reached shore they thought they had weathered the worst experience in their lighthouse lives. They did not know it was only the beginning.

They rushed supplies aboard and got ready to put to sea again. Too late. . . . The gale came up malevolently, the seas rose h'gher than ever, the whole coast was blotted out in wind and wave.

A lighthouse keeper cut off from his light. It was an appalling moment. "I must go back," Langton said. "You'll never get across to-night," the fisherman said, and Mrs. Langton muttered, "Ethel's alone—and nothing to eat—just a bit of bread."

Yes, out there in the fury of the gale, with every sound drowned by the boom of wind and wave, a fifteen-year-old girl was alone in the lighthouse, alone in the empty rooms and the concrete walls, with night coming down. There was no food. No fire. Not even a cat.

Two Fishermen Turned Back

The Langtons watched and prayed from the shore. Dusk deepened. Then something split the skyline. A great beam flashing. The light! It had begun its night's job again. For an incredible moment there were those amongst the watchers who wondered whether something had stirred in the concrete limbs, and from long, long habit set the light going without human aid.

Then they knew that it was Ethel. The devils of the sea might have kept her tightly shut inside, but she came out into the gale and the night, and climbed that slender steel ladder.

The waves were going right over the concrete part of the lighthouse now. They drenched her, tried to tear her down. She struggled to open the heavy metal door of the light. Langton himself was a powerful man. He could only just manage it. For a fifteen-year-old girl it seemed impossible. The wind nearly ripped the clothes from her body. But she got it open and slid inside. Then they saw the light break out. . . .

Sunday and still the gale roared. Two fishermen tried to reach her and had to turn back. Dusk came down again. Twenty-four hours with the sea and the gale, without food or heating. A slip of a girl facing another night, alone

But that night the light flashed out once more. Ethel had climbed again, wound the clock. Cut off where the mind could pick a dozen terrifying cries out of the voice of the sea, where giant figures were built by the wind and the cloud and the water to shake the stauncheat spirit, she went on with the job.

Monday. Still surf went rushing down the coast and the sea was mad Another day without food, another day alone. And then for the third time the child went out, up the ladder, and once again the light flashed on.

But she was getting desperate now. Three days and nights like that could work upon the mind of the strongest man. And for a child. . . .

A Sack of Food

By Tuesday afternoon something had to be done. Three men got away in their motor-boat. They were nearly smashed to p'eces, but survived, and tried to draw alongside the lighthouse. . . . Impossible. Instead they closed with a shoal, one of the men jumped up to his waist in the sea, waded to the ladder and handed a sack of food to Ethel.

At five o'clock that afternoon the lifeboat managed to reach her and at last her ordeal came to an end.

In his exciting book, "Wonders of Salvage," just published by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 10s. 6d., David Masters ends this story with the words: "That is the spirit of England."

Certainly it is a feat unique in the annals of lighthouse history, a feat told here for the first time. Anyone stimulated by adventure at sea should read this book. It is full of good stories.

VINCENT BROME.

"Whoopee!"

The late Eric Gill, quoted in letter below, working on his fresco which dominates Broadcasting House

Free Speech

"DO WOMEN WANT PEACE?"

This page is for your opinions. Speak out—say what you like from JOHN BULL'S Free Speech Platform

YOUR CORRESPONDENT, Mrs. G. M., states that men make wars and women are left to grieve over their lost sons.

The late Eric Gill, the sculptor, in his "Last Essays," says: "The pursuit of riches is the beginning of war, and war is the necessary, inevitable, right and proper and logical accompaniment of that pursuit. . . . Women desire possessions, riches even more wholeheartedly than men, with an even greater tenacity. Worldly success, worldly honour, respectability; all these things are the breath of life to mothers of children. Do women want peace? Yes, because war has not come home to them. But do they want the things that make for peace? I do not see the slightest sign of that. . . ."

War has come home to women since Eric Gill wrote, but his essay stands, written as it is round one of the greatest of all truths: we want peace, but not the things that make for peace.—Derek Surtees, 60, Market Street, Hoyland, Barnsley, Yorkshire.

Food for Thought

MAY I ANSWER two of your correspondents? Mr. Redfern wants to know why the Ministry of Food don't allow poultry keepers more feeding-stuffs. Well, it takes six tons of first quality feeding-stuffs to produce one ton of eggs—so it's much more economical of shipping space to import the shell eggs rather than the hen food.

Mrs. E. B., of Clapham, complains about lack of offals. Answer: a certain proportion of the available offals is used for pharmaceutical purposes and there is a much greater demand for what remains than there was before the war. Offal forms a small proportion of the meat available. An average bullock, valued at £30, would cut up into more than 500 rations. But, as there would only be one tail, the housewife couldn't be supplied with oxtail more often than, say, once a year.—W. Shelton Smith, Ministry of Food, W.1.

Sunday Showdown

Question: Why should members of the Forces fight for us on Sundays? *Answer*: Supposing we said they shouldn't, would it make any difference? There are many things to-day where circumstances have deprived us of all choice.

Question: Why doesn't the Lord's Day Observance Society give from its own large funds the sums it loses to charity by stopping Sunday shows? *Answer*: The money sent to us is for a specific purpose. To divert its use presents an ethical, and possibly a legal case. Certain concerts are forbidden by statutory law. Why not ask the State to make atonement to charity and to the artists who lose fees by such a ban?

Question: Would you prefer to burn rather than be rescued by an N.F.S. man on Sunday? *Answer*: We are not much good as ashes, so we should prefer rescue. Some of us have had experience of Sunday fire-fighting. Would the reader who put the question like to be rescued by us?—Rev. Walter H. Denbow, Lord's Day Observance Society, 108, Finchley Road, N.W.3.

One Airman: 10s.

UNTIL RECENTLY I WAS under training for air crew in the R.A.F. I was discharged with a civilian suit, some personal kit, and 10s. My wife's allowance ceased at the time of my discharge. Surely we are worth more than 10s. and a civvy suit if we volunteered for air crew service?—ROBERT J. MOORE, Notting Hill, London, W.11.

I WAS DISCHARGED from the Army after being invalided home from Italy. Imagine my surprise when I was given £4 to go on leave with. This included allowance for my keep, and I've been at home three weeks and have not received another copper.

But I would like to thank the people of Liverpool who are doing so much for us wounded. Apart from free 'bus travel and free cinemas, the people take wounded men into their homes for meals and see that the more unfortunate are never left without visitors at the hospitals.—W. L. G., Rochester, Kent.

Open the Doors

JOHN BULL deserves congratulations for directing attention to the scandal of local councils going into committee and discussing public affairs behind closed doors. Local Food Committees, Education Committees and similar bodies administering wartime measures are guilty of the same thing. Critics of council, however, must not expect all discussion to be in the open. The moment a hint is given of building plans, for instance, in jump land speculators to make profits out of the ratepayers.

The land speculator is the biggest menace to-day to schemes for public improvements. Strict secrecy is essential at first, otherwise he will cash in. With this proviso, the more publicity we get for local affairs the better, especially as many councils have had no elections for six years, and are often out of touch with the people.—Charles Leatherland, J.P., Chairman, Finance Committee, Billericay, Essex.

"They say she was left five clothing coupons by a poor relation"

Pity the Leaseholder

AS AN ESTATE AGENT and valuer, I fully agree with all you say about leasehold property. ("Threat to Fifteen Hundred Families," JOHN BULL, December 2.) A Bill should certainly be introduced to deal with the subject. I wonder how many people realise that an owner of leasehold property is bound to restore it exactly to its original condition if it's blitzed to the ground. He is under an obligation to do it even if the cost of erection to-day is three or four times the original.—B. S., Worthing.

Strike Up the Band

THERE'S NOTHING MORE encouraging for a boy than to take part in a march headed by a lively band, and parade to church on a Sunday morning. Since few bands are about before 10 a.m. (at which time no one should be in bed) there is little ground for complaint.—Allan Branagan, Lieutenant, Church Lads' Brigade, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough.

"Makes a Muckle"

BECAUSE I WROTE against the Social Security Plan, your Birmingham reader thinks I'm well provided for and have no thought for the less fortunate. Well, I'm a worker, but having learnt the spirit of Scotch independence, I've found it wonderful what one can have saved up for old age. A man paying contributions from twenty-one to sixty-five will have paid out just over £438. If he dies at the allotted span he will get back £260. But if he saved 4s. a week on his own over the forty-four years he would have £458. He could spend £1 a week for five years and then if he died his heirs would have something. They wouldn't under the Government scheme.—A. McN., Dundee.

Don't Disband Them

WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN to the thousands of working parties which have been organised during the war to make comforts for the troops or to aid local service charities? Surely these groups should not be abandoned when the war is over. Hospitals, churches and schools should continue to benefit from the voluntary labour of lonely women. To put one's religion into one's finger-tips is not a bad way to help to turn this old world right side up when the fighting is finished.—Mrs. Gertrude A. Rogers, Patcham, Brighton, Sussex.

Holidays for Wives

WHAT IS THE FIRST thing I shall try to do when I am demobbed? Give my wife a real holiday. Not enough men in the Services fully appreciate that, while they may have had regular leave breaks, their wives have had to run the home, look after the children, deal with business matters, fight to exist on meagre allowances, suffer a thousand privations, whether they felt well or ill, happy or desperately lonely, often without a single day's break since war began. So give her a complete rest and change as soon as you can, chaps—she really deserves it!—Flt.-Sgt. Ian Stewart, Allen Road, Haywards Heath, Sussex.

Miserable Mothers

WHY DON'T YOU GIVE the addresses of some of the people who write to you? Your readers will be able to send on enlightenment without troubling you if you tell us where to write.

As a father of six children I am sure the mother's instinct, of which Mrs. G. M., Chelmsford, boasts, wants some accepting. The worst a father will do is to abandon his children, and too often, then, it is because of some miserable mother he has to put up with. (*No name or address given.*)

Payment in Smiles

AS A REWARD for hard labour in a large school, with a class of fifty thirteen-year-old boys and girls and many other responsibilities, I, as an uncertificated teacher, receive an average of £11 5s. a month. Cheap labour? Thank God for the children's smiles.—G. B., East Anglia.

Spirit of Economy

A BIG LONDON FIRM has a curious method of delivering the monthly spirits allocation to public-houses on its books. Instead of dealing with all the houses in a certain area in one day, the lorry driver has to go according to the initial letter of the pub's name. This means trips all over the place. The George in West London and The George in North London have to be visited on one trip, while the King's Heads have to wait their turn. It doesn't matter if they happen to be in the next street to the Georges. It's all very funny—but it's all very wasteful, too.—J. JARMAN, Sutherland Avenue, Maida Vale, W.9.

Thanks to "John Bull"

IT GIVES ME SATISFACTION to know that when you printed my letter in your "Free Speech" page the Air Ministry got into touch with you about it and looked into the case of my daughter who had such difficulty in finding a billet when she was sent to Blackpool. Thank you.—MRS. H. M. MCHALE, Tunstall Road, Epsom, Surrey.

Ersatz Cold Cure

THE SNIFFING SEASON is here again. My remedy for a cold used to be two aspirins and a glass of hot whisky and milk on going to bed. Now it is two aspirins and a glass of hot water. Funnily enough, it seems to work just as well!—THOMAS BLAKE, Surbiton, Surrey.

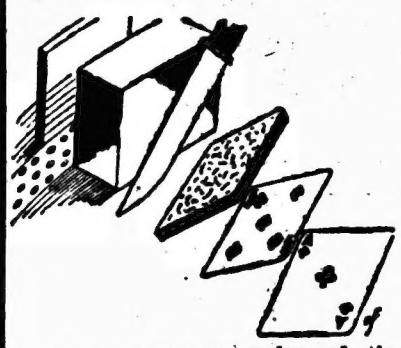
For Christmas Trees

I MADE SOME REALISTIC "sugar pigs" imitation watches and such like for the children's Christmas tree by mixing household milk with warm syrup. The result is a pliable mass which hardens quite solid and is a nourishng substitute for the real thing.—Mrs. E. C. Reader, 78, Wathen Road, Leamington Spa.

ONE GUINEA will be paid as an acknowledgment for every reader's letter or extract published each week. Full name and address must be given (though not necessarily for publication). Please keep your letters brief.

Your New Life

Bread and Bridge



HERE ARE TWO examples of the impact of electronics on your everyday life.

First, your daily bread.

Hitherto, grain in storage has been at the mercy of two destructive insects—the grain-borer and the granary-weevil.

Now grain, travelling rapidly along a belt conveyor, passes between two electronically heated metal plates which, raising the temperature of the kernels to 130 degrees Fahrenheit, destroy all insect life within a minute, without damaging the grain.

Second, your leisure hours.

The application of electronics to card-playing will speed up nearly all games from bridge downwards.

Automatic shufflers and dealers have so far been too complicated for general use, but electronic control has made possible a new design.

The player whose turn it is to deal will place the pack of cards in the machine, first pressing a button which shuffles them, and then pressing another which will arrange the automatic delivery of the correct number of ready-dealt hands suitable for the particular game and number of players involved.—H. H.

Your Good Health

Inside Story

by Dr. GREVILLE PARK

SOME DRUGS ACT VERY SIMPLY. Thus, bismuth coats your stomach, stops your food irritating it, and relieves indigestion.

Anæsthetics act because they happen to be insoluble in water (hence in most of the body cells), but are easily soluble in the lipoid of nerve cells.

Epsom salts works because it is sulphate of magnesia—neither sulphate nor magnesia can be absorbed by the body, but both soak up lots of water, which is retained in the intestines and washes it out. Castor-oil is gentle enough in the stomach, but when it reaches the intestine and mixes with bile it gets highly irritant—and you know the answer.

Most drugs are more complicated. Many have a special affinity for certain parts of the body.

Cocaine picks out sensory nerve cells, so is used for a local anæsthetic. The arrow poison, curare, paralyses motor nerves, so the victim dies, unable to move an eyelash, but completely conscious. Digitalis tones up heart muscles; belladonna soothes the nerves which cause colic.

M and B drugs neutralise a chemical which some germs feed on, so they just die of starvation, which is a good idea.

While many drugs are given by the mouth, some, like insulin and penicillin, are destroyed by the gastric juice, so have to be given by injection to get any effect.

Pantomime Carries On

Here they are again—the perennial favourites of that very British institution, Christmas pantomime. Dames, Robbers, Fairies, Brokers' Men, Cats, and all the goodly company

FOR THE SIXTH war time Christmas, pantomime, that typically British institution, again takes the stage. On Boxing Day, eager audiences will troop into at least two hundred and fifty theatres throughout the country to see principal boys, as glamorous as ever, marching towards the footlights with the dash, gallantry and grace that stirs both young and old.

In spite of war time conditions, at least £2,000,000 is at stake in the production costs of these Christmas shows.

However, the wise-heads in the theatrical world will tell you that it is almost impossible to lose money in pantomime production these days. That is, if you use common-sense, imagination, showmanship, and a considerable amount of money.

Any pantomime story, from "Puss in Boots" to "Cinderella," is due for success this season provided it is trimmed to suit modern taste. There must be lavish settings and gorgeous costumes.

Traditional Recipe

There must be at least twelve scenes, a flying ballet, a good comedian, and some songs which you can hum on the way home.

True, war time Transformation Scenes may not be quite so breath-taking as those of pre-war days. But even from the front row of the stalls the spectacle will look pretty good, and from the pit and gallery it will look almost as magnificent as ever.

For the past four weeks at least those behind the scenes in the pantomime world have been having a long series of headaches.

One of the main difficulties has been to find sufficient chorus girls. Almost all of them are now in the Services or on war work.

I found a statistician in a variety agent's office who estimated that no fewer than 12,000 girls, who in happier years pulled on their tights for the annual pantomimes in London, or Scunthorpe, or Wigan, are now doing much more important jobs.

The harassed pantomime producer has to create his chorus girls out of material found in unusual places. Dancing schools throughout the country have been thoroughly combed for likely girls under military age. These have been given short, intensive courses in singing and dancing. Having seen some of them at rehearsals, I pronounce them good.

The Greengrocer's Daughter

Tom Arnold, the producer, who will have at least eleven elaborate pantomimes running this season in London and the provinces, had the idea of holding local talent-finding auditions in each town. This scheme has proved particularly successful.

The use of local talent adds to the interest of the show in provincial towns. Friends and relatives will go several times to see "our young Hilda," who is now fourth girl from the left in the front row of the chorus, singing and dancing as if her life depended on it.

Bill Smith, the greengrocer in the High Street, whose daughter has been engaged for the pantomime at the local Palace of Varieties, swells with pride as he breaks the news to his customers. It all helps to increase interest in the show.

So the choruses this year will be made up mostly of youngsters between sixteen and eighteen. If their figures are less ample than those of the pantomime of a former age—well, perhaps we like them a little slimmer and less coy now.

Another headache in the pantomime world has been making old things look like new. For weeks past wardrobe mistresses, stage-carpenters, scene-painters, and stage-hands have been busy renovating dresses, costumes, uniforms, backdrops, and fairy palaces.

Even the writers have been working hard to give last year's jokes an up-to-date twist.

During all this "behind the scenes" work, Ugly Sisters, Demon Kings, Brokers' Men, and Fairy Queens have been going through their "lines" and trying out songs and new dance numbers.

Keeping a watchful eye on all these activities are the producers. There is nothing flamboyant about these key-men. They are shrewd business men who produce pantomimes as other men produce shoes, mangles, or perambulators.

Tom Arnold is a good example. He is a typical business man, but with this difference from some I have met—he is cheerful and open to new ideas.

Years ago he was making a success as a stockbroker. So it was a big step when he decided to forsake the City for the sensational thrills of the theatre.

Since then he has carried a load of worry and trouble with good humour. With three big shows due to open in London, and others at Glasgow, Manchester, Newcastle, Leeds, Liverpool, Birmingham, Nottingham and Blackpool, he remains like a rock, unmoved by the excited waves of Christmas productions breaking over his head.

"War or no war," Tom Arnold said, "the children expect their pantomimes to be spectacular and glamorous. Adults also want them that way. We are going to make them so despite all the restrictions."

Pat Kirkwood will be one of this season's Principal Boys

They Book in July

Another leading pantomime producer, Emile Littler, has been spending the last few weeks flitting between the Coliseum, London, and Sheffield, Coventry, Birmingham and Manchester.

He is a mild-mannered and soft-spoken man who takes a fatherly interest in every production.

"Goody Two Shoes" is his big show in London this year. The first advance bookings for it were made as far back as July!

Emile Littler is shy and gives an impression that he has strayed into the theatre world by accident. In fact, he was born into it, and there are few shrewder judges of what it takes to make a first-class show.

One of the more recent entrants into pantomime production is Jack Hylton, the dance band leader. He has developed into an impresario who is as impressive as his shows are spectacular.

His big pantomime show this year is "Babes in the Wood." With Adele Dixon as Principal Boy, Nervo and Knox, and "Monsewer" Eddie Gray in the cast, a good time is bound to be had by all.

You'll Forget the War

One pantomime producer told me that the popularity of such shows in war time is simply explained.

"For a few hours, at least, people want to forget about the war," he said, "and pantomime provides the ideal form of escape.

"That's why we are using few war time gags in our show, and why we are having a ballet, rather than a big military chorus number. If we make people leave their war worries at home, I think we have done a real job."

So things are set for a bumper season. As the curtain glides upwards and we settle down to enjoy the show, let us hope it will be our last war time pantomime.

HARRY FOWLER.

Jimmy Nervo—and partner Teddy Knox—are always a pantomime success

"John Bull" Inquiry Bureau Conducted by "Humanist"

THEY DON'T WANT HIM HOME

The soldier whose youngsters resent his return. A father feels cut off from his daughter. Brother and sister argue over equal pay

"AFTER SERVING OVERSEAS for nearly three years I've come back eagerly to my wife and family as a home-loving sort of man. My wife is thankful to have me back again, but the two children are different. My boy, aged ten, is sullen and miserable; my eight-year-old daughter says she wishes I'd go away again! I feel an intruder. It's horrible. Can you explain it and offer any help?"

Similar complaints have come from others, and there will doubtless be many more. It would be a good idea if Army Education tackled this problem before demobilisation.

The children have got used to the father's absence. The family circle was complete without him and he finds himself the odd man out. Jealousy is the root of the trouble. The children have had the mother "all to themselves" and her obvious pleasure in the father's return makes them feel they must take a second place.

It is useless to lecture or scold them. They will have to adjust themselves to the new situation, and this takes a little time. Don't try bribery to win them—they will see through that at once. The rest can be safely left to the mother, for it's really in her hands.

"MY WIFE HAS A violent temper and the rows we had became intolerable. I explained the circumstances to a Probation Officer. He advised me to make her an allowance and leave home, which I did.

"I have a daughter, aged twenty, of whom I am very fond. I gave her my address and asked her to come to see me occasionally. She has never done so and this hurts me. I think her mother has turned her against me. I have no regrets about leaving my wife, but I do wish to continue seeing my daughter. Can I go to the house and see her, or would this be regarded as illegal?"

A girl of twenty should be able to see the rights and wrongs of the case. Her mother could not prevent her from visiting you if she wanted to do so. Apparently she does not sympathise with you. You could perhaps write to her at her business address and suggest a definite appointment to meet, then you can put your side of the case to her fairly. Whether you can go to the house depends upon the terms of the mutual agreement when you left.

"I AM AN ASSISTANT-MASTER in a large school, and my twin sister teaches in the girls' department. My salary is rather larger than hers and this has caused endless quarrels and not a little bitterness. Yet I support a wife and child on my earnings while my sister has no dependants.

"Has the principle of equal pay for the sexes ever been tried, and with what results? So far I have always come off second best in arguments on the subject."

The whole complicated problem of equal pay is now being discussed by a Royal Commission, and we shall have to wait for the report. Men and women M.P.s receive equal salaries; men and women doctors in Government employment are treated alike; American girls in the W.A.A.C. get the same rates of pay as the soldiers.

One good result is that men are not displaced from jobs by women who will do the same work for less money. But surely the whole idea of equality is fundamentally just and democratic? In the meantime, let us wait for the report of the Commission.

Gratuity will be Paid

T. R., Harringay, and others: The Prime Minister stated in the House of Commons recently that when a life is lost the war gratuity will not be withheld on that account. Whether or not it would be properly payable to the next-of-kin would depend on any will made by the dead officer or man.

H. G., Fakenham: When a soldier is wounded, the Record Office receives information of this and passes it on to the next-of-kin. If the man is not classified as either "seriously ill" or "dangerously ill" when admitted to hospital no further information would be furnished, the soldier being presumably well enough to write himself.

M. B., Liverpool: While you can go to another doctor, no part of the fees charged by him can be recovered from National Health Insurance. Free medical treatment can only be obtained from your local panel doctor, but you can transfer to another doctor's panel.

F. D., Chatham: Income dax deductions under the P.A.Y.E. scheme tend to vary by 1s. or so from one week to another even though the weekly wage remains the same. This is because the Tables that are used deal with earnings in "jumps" of 5s. and the odd shillings ignored one week are carried forward to the next, and so on.

R. J., Wembley: There is no Army Council Instruction which precludes any recovery of a soldier's debt. Normally, within certain limitations, the recovery of over-issues is made from serving soldiers, and while there is no regulation providing for the recovery after a man is discharged, it is the practice of the Regimental Paymaster to inquire whether the individual is in a position to refund the whole or part of a debt remaining on the soldier's discharge.

E. M., Gillingham: If the employment you wish to enter is scheduled under the Undertakings (Restriction on Engagement) Order, you cannot enter it unless the local employment exchange issues an introduction card. Should it be necessary to apply for a card, the exchange may refuse to issue it and direct you into other employment. Upon receipt of any such direction you can notify the National Service Officer that you wish to appeal to the local Appeal Board.

Service

SEND YOUR PERSONAL or other problems (except medical) to the JOHN BULL Inquiry Bureau, 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2, which answers countless queries by post. Stamped, addressed envelope, please.

Grants to ex-Servicemen and dependants are made by JOHN BULL War Sufferers' Fund (registered under the War Charities Act, 1940): Box 44, 64, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

"Just fancy this happening to ME!"

EVERY Friday it happens. To the home of some *John Bull* reader who tries *Bullets* comes a thrilling Joy Wire from Long Acre—and in *Bullets* No. 1,452 it came to 79-year-old Mr. H. G. Warden, of 3, Larkfield Road, Gourock.

You, or any other *John Bull* reader could have made up his simple but telling First Prize *Bullet*, To Get More Houses—Start "Bevin Boy" *Builders*! And you, like Mr. Warden, can soon be saying, "Fancy this happening to *me*!"

HOW TO WIN—USE THESE "EXAMPLES"

Simply add 2, 3 or 4 words of apt and original comment to any of the "Examples" and you've made a "Bullet."

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HITLER'S DOUBLE
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LITTLE MAN
IN THE JUNGLE
STROKE OF GENIUS
HER RELATIONS
PRIVATE SMITH
ENJOYING THEMSELVES
LIKE A STARTLED RABBIT
RARE AND REFRESHING
JEWEL OF TRUTH
DAD'S IMAGINATION
WE MAY BE POOR, BUT

Six "Examples" below are for completion with any ONE additional word of your choice in the position indicated by dotted line. Then build your "Bullet" as usual.

MADE HIS.....
PRAISE THE.....AND
WHEN EVERYBODY.....
THE ..... PEOPLE
NOT A.....
OUR OLD.....

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£20: A. O. Mills, Osborne St., Rhos, Wrexham. Adding To Our Stature—"Note" We "Stood" In.

£10: R. T. Roberts, "Bwlan," 8, Love Lane, Denbigh, N. Wales. The Christmas Spirit—"Ghost," If You're "Savage."

£5: Sgt. M. E. Brown, R.A.F., British Liberation Army. What Marriage Means—Miss Hurt, Miss Her!

£4: Gnr. F. Watts, Somewhere-in-Britain. Instead Of Garlands—Mud's "Honest Medal," Now.

£3: G. Kitching, 5, Burley Hill Drive, Leeds. Party Warfare—Hasn't Its Reconstruction's "Waterloo."

"Bullets" Pointers—No. 2

Thoughts are fleeting things, so be wise and do your *Bullets* thinking with a pencil handy. Scores of First-Prize *Bullets* have been built from ideas which, in the first instance, were just pencilled roughly in the margin of *John Bull*.

£2: G. Brown, 14, Priory Road, Bedford Park, W.4. Precious Possession—Adolf's Jaundice—Hitler Bust?

£2: R. G. Yeates, Church Street, Martock, Somerset. Can't Have Everything—"The *Half*-Moon" Satisfies Dad!

£2: R. Chivers, 17, East Avenue, Rawmarsh, Nr. Rotherham. Home-front Hero—So Unexpectedly, Tokyo Warden!

£1: L. Gittleman, 21, Oak Road, Leeds. Home-front Hero—Captured "Number Eight Battery."

£1: W. P. Collier, 10, Woodville Terrace, Selby. The Christmas Spirit—Sonny Helps Santa Upstairs!

£1: R. A. Rossell, 11, Ashworth Av., Ruddington, Notts. Straight From the Raid—Pilot "Dived Into" Turbine.

A list of 100 winners of Xmas Cakes can be seen at these offices. 1,000 Merit Awards have been posted.

RULES 1.—Bullets First Prize will be awarded for best Bullet received and other prizes in order of merit, the test being cleverness, aptness and originality. 2.—The Editor undertakes that all entries in Bullets shall receive careful consideration by a staff of competent adjudicators. 3.—To cover 1d. Bulletin charge and entry-fee enclose P.O. and stamps value 6d. for two Bullets, or 1s. to cover four. Two free Bullets allowed with each four paid and plain paper entries are allowed. If P.O. used, make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co.... write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Members of H.M. Forces half-rate if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated. 4.—Entries accepted only on condition that result of this week's Contest published in JOHN BULL dated Jan. 20, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Employees of Odhams Press Ltd. and families not eligible.

XWORD

FIRST PRIZE £50—Other prizes value £25 and up to 100 Fruit Cakes. On plain paper, give IN INK 14 completed words answering Clues below.

1. Christmas helps to bring out—□OLLY. 2. Quick one gets people to work faster—TU□E. 3. Should be easy to distinguish on hiker's map—□ORDS. 4. Attitude of cat to parents now and again leaves much to be desired LA□. 5. Invalid's chronic trouble sometimes turns out to be—L□NG. 6. Many a man wears such an old coat for gardening—□OKN. 7. May be more appreciated when Spring returns—BE□CHES. 8. Certain ones are associated with certain houses—A□MS. 9. Climber may have been foolish to come nasty cropper over this—□RINK. 10. Father may perhaps do this to get something out of sonny—TA□. 11. If you want to do this, paste may perhaps be necessary—□AKE. 12. It's hard work for an actor to play this kind of role—DU□L. 13. Some tricksters wouldn't do so well if there were not—□OOLS. 14. Is more easily taught slowly—D□NCE.

Entry fee—one 3d. stamp per set of Answers, including payment for January 13 *Gazette*. Last day to post—Monday, January 1. ADDRESS ENTRY: X.Word 616, John Bull, Long Acre, W.C.2 (Comp.).

CHEQUES & CAKES WON IN XWORD 406

WINNING WORDS: 1. FAKED. 2. BEAN. 3. WOOD. 4. PAIN. 5. DASH. 6. WORKS. 7. SLEEP. 8. GLEBE. 9. HELM. 10. RITE. 11. WET. 12. GUN. 13. WAGERS. 14. MARKED.

TWO £50 SHARERS: Mrs. I. S. Carnegie, Inverugie; V. Williamson, Belfast. 17 Runners-up Awards including Cakes.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers submitted—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entry constitutes agreement to Rules.

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What do I do...?

I do all I can to keep up my resistance by eating a well-balanced diet, including fuel foods such as potatoes and oatmeal, and by getting my full ration of fats. I get as much fresh air as possible every day and a full quota of sleep.

If I catch cold, I use my handkerchief whenever I cough or sneeze, and so keep my germs to myself. If there is shivering and headache, I go to bed at once and call a doctor.

I remember that the nation's health is the nation's first weapon.

Issued by the Ministry of Information

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Be wise. Get a bottle of Parmint Syrup from your chemist to-day and keep it handy. 1/3d. the bottle including tax.

NOTE.—If you want to make up a large bottle of it yourself, ask for a 1-oz. bottle of the Parmint Concentrated Essences (Price 3/1½d.). JB

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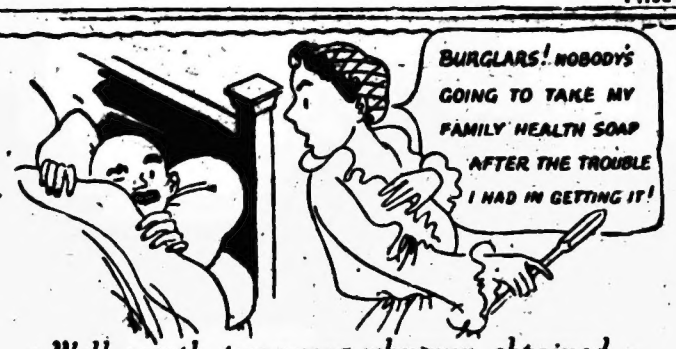

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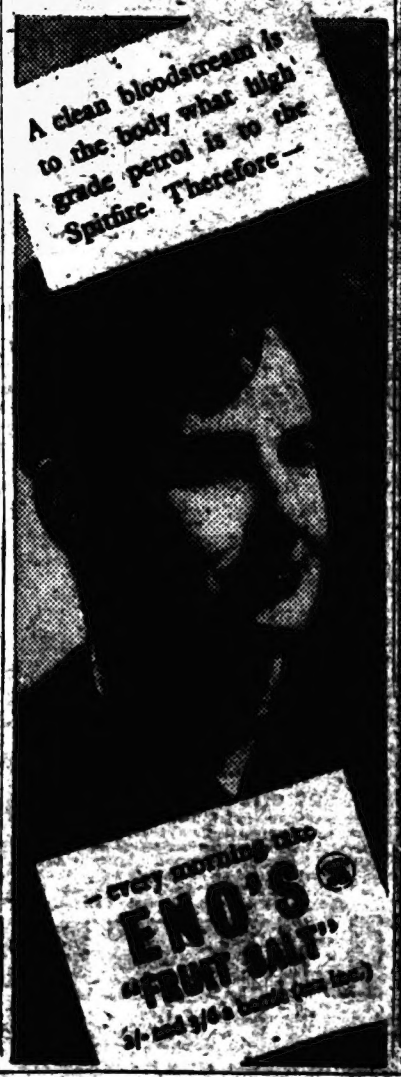
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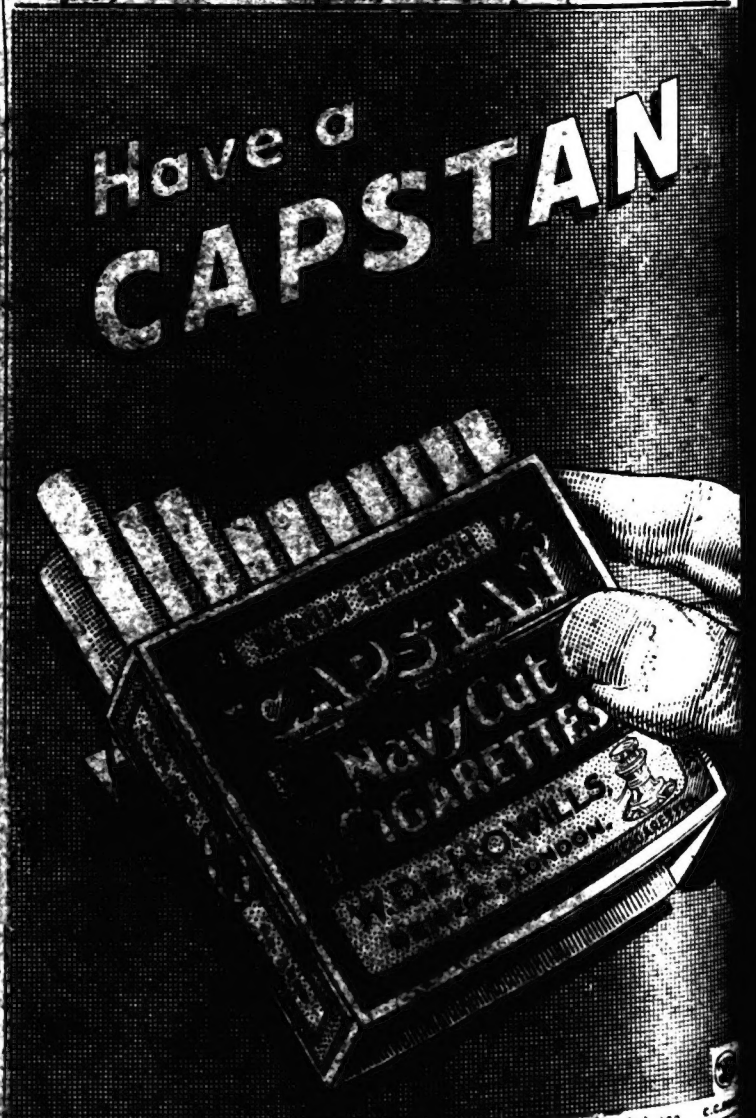

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